

*CHIVALROUS CONDUCT OF MAC
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their absence, prevailed among some of the members of the Provisional Government and other persons assembled in the *salon* where I was.

While the Marshals were with Alexander I learned that they had previously conversed with M. de Talleyrand, who observed to them, " If you succeed in your designs you will compromise all who have met in this hotel since the 1st of April, and the number is not small. For my part, take no account of me, I am willing to be compromised." I had passed the evening of this day with M. de Talleyrand, who then observed to the Emperor Alexander in my presence, " Will you support Bonaparte ? No, you neither can nor will. I have already had the honor to tell your Majesty that we can have no choice but between Bonaparte and Louis XVIII.; anything else would be an intrigue, and no intrigue can have power to support him who may be its object. Bernadotte, Eugene, the Regency, all those propositions result from intrigues. In present circumstances nothing but a new principle is sufficiently strong to establish the new order of things which must be adopted. *Louis XVIII. is a principle.*"

None of the members of the Provisional Government were present at this conference, for no one was willing to appear to influence in any way the determination, of the chief of the coalition upon the subject of this important mission.¹ General Dessolles alone, in quality of commander of the National Guard of Paris, was requested to be present. At length the Marshals entered the *salon* where we were, and their appearance created a sensation which it is impossible to describe; but the expression of dissatisfaction which we thought we remarked in their countenances restored the hopes of those who for some hours had been a prey to apprehensions. Mac-don aid, with his head elevated, and evidently under the influence of strong irritation, approached Beurnonville, and thus addressed him, in answer to a question which the latter had put to him. " Speak not to me, sir ; I have nothing to say to you. You have made me forget a friendship of thirty years ! "

¹ In the account of the next few days Boixrrienne follows pretty closely the Memoirs of Marmont (Paris, Perrotin, 1857, nine tomes).